**Christianity**

Christianity is a well-known religion that started around 2,000 years ago. This particular religion is based off of Jesus of Nazareth’s life and teachings. The Bible tells a lot about Christianity. It tells stories about the lives of Jesus and some of his followers. It was written by various people who lived and walked with Him. Even though there were many powerful people living in this time period, there is only one God. The many branches of Christianity include Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestant. Even more than that, there are branches of the Protestant denomination. These include Baptist, Lutheran, and Anglican. While some religions worship in a synagogue, Christians worship in churches. Some churches are ornate, while others are simple.

**The Vatican**

The Vatican is a spiritual population of the smallest state in the world. The environment is Catholic. The man in charge of this city is always the Pope. He makes the decisions and even gives orders to the Swiss Guard located inside the city walls. The Swiss Guard is positioned there to keep the Pope safe. The State of the Vatican City has a small population of 900. The measurements that make it the smallest state are 0.17 sq mile. Most people residing in the Vatican speak Latin, which is the official language, but because the state is in Rome, Italy some speak Italian. The Vatican is a very Holy place with the major religion being Christianity.

**Conclave**

In the event that the Pope dies, conclave is held in Vatican City. The Latin translation of this is cum clavi meaning with a key. This has a special meaning because in the early stages of conclave, the doors used to be closed and locked after the Pope gave the opening prayer, and the only way they would be released would be to come to the decision of a new Pope. Cardinals are the possible elects that attend conclave. Nowadays, the cardinals have a pleasurable stay while making the decision. This could be part of the reason the need to starve the cardinals out of conclave in 1268. Since the cardinals had made themselves so comfortable and certainly weren’t rushing to make a decision, they were starved out. Their food intake was first reduced to bread, and then to nothing. In this time period, conclave still occurs, but doesn’t usually last so long. To vote, the cardinals take their ballot up to the front of the alter, and drop it on a plate which they then use to slide the paper into the chalice. This way, all the others can be sure that only one vote is being dropped in. The writing on all the ballots is usually disguised in some way. Whether by using calligraphy, or by writing in block letters, the cardinals find some way to make sure that their votes are well kept. After all votes are made, a designated cardinal, who is then not able to be voted into the position, counts up the votes by picking out one at a time, reading it out loud, threading a needle through it, and then making a tally. If the vote is failed, meaning there is not a 2/3 majority vote, the ballots are burned with a chemical producing black smoke. If there If there is a 2/3 majority vote, which usually doesn’t happen until after a few votes, the designated cardinal will then combine all the votes and a chemical that turns the smoke white, and lights it on fire. The smoke comes out the top of the building and the people waiting outside then know the outcome. Along with that, the bells of the church ring because in the past the white smoke has appeared almost gray. Following this, the Pope elect accepts the position and the designated cardinal steps out to proclaim the outcome. The new Pope then joins him on the balcony. This traditional conclave has only been altered a little since the original form, and hopefully it will remain the form of choosing a new Pope for years to come.